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REPORT ON POLISH-UKRAINIAN RELATIONS

Introductory Note: The following report was prepared by Walter Dushnyck, editor of The Ukrainian Quarterly and The Ukrainian Bulletin, on the basis of conversations and exchange of views with some 17 Polish newspapermen and 2 Polish Catholic Bishops, whom he met in October and November, 1963 in Rome during the Ecumenical Council. The majority of the Polish newsmen came from Poland.

They were: Ignacy KRASICKI (Polish Radio), Kazimierz MORAWSKI (Zs i Przeciw, Warsaw), Jerzy TUROWICZ (Tygodnik Powszechny, Gracow), Jadwiga PASENKIEWICZ (PAP--Polska Agencja Prasowa, Warsaw), Zbigniew CZAJKOWSKI (Zycie i Mysl, Warsaw), LACZKOWSKI (PAX), Alexander KO--TENSKI, Jan DOBROCCZYNSKI (writer, PAX), Rev. Michael CZAJKOWSKI (Tygodnik Powszechny), Stanislaw DABROWSKI (Jehovah's witnesses--the Seventh Day Adventists, Warsaw), Rev. K. KINSZKA ("Radio Free Europe," Munich), Rev. Tomasz ROSTKOWSKI (the Vatican Radio), Stanislaw CROCHOLSKI (Dziennik Polski i Zolnierz, London), Jan A. TOKARSKI (London), KOMLA ("Radio Free Europe," Rome), ONYSKIEWICZ (Catholic Action, London), BALINSKI (Catholic Action, London), Dr. Joseph NEWLIN (freelance writer, Rome).

The two Polish Catholic Bishops were: Bishop Michael KLEPACZ, Lodz (right-hand of Stefan Cardinal WYSZYNSKI), and Bishop Herbert BEDNORZ of Katowice.

The overall attitude of Poles toward Ukrainians was given by Ignacy Krasicki, although most of the Polish newsmen had given their views on the Ukrainian-Polish relations in conversations held on several occasions. In reply to a written questionnaire, I. Krasicki provided the following answers:

Question: What are the relations between Poles and Ukrainians (the Ukrainian minority) in Poland at the present time?

Answer: Because of the small number of Ukrainians in Poland at this time (the Poles estimate the number of Ukrainians in Poland at 200,000, while the Ukrainians report that at least 450,000 Ukrainians are in Poland at present--W.D.), the Ukrainian problem for all practical purposes does not exist in Poland. Since October, 1956 there is a noted improvement in Polish-Ukrainian relations. The Poles believe that through intermarriage processes the Ukrainian minority will eventually be assimilated.

Question: What do you know about the cultural life of Ukrainians in Poland?

Answer: There exist a "Ukrainian Social and Cultural Society" (USKT) in Poland which is quite active in promoting Ukrainian cultural activities. It also publishes a newspaper in the Ukrainian language. However, there are no Ukrainian schools.

Question: What do you think of the USKT as approved by the Gomułka Government?

Answer: The USKT develops quite extensive activities in South-eastern Poland, where compact Ukrainian ethnic groups live. The USKT is trying to popularize and perpetuate the Ukrainian cultural tradition in Poland. Under its sponsorship a film on Taras Shevchenko, produced by the Kiev Film Studio, was shown throughout Poland.

Question: What, if any, contacts exist between Poland and Ukraine? Personal, scientific, professional, student exchanges, etc.?

Answer: All contacts are implemented within the framework of the exchange programs between Poland and the USSR, and the cooperation in cultural, economic and scientific fields. Polish theatrical and dance ensembles ("Mazowsze," "Slask" and others) make regular visits to Ukraine, and there are Polish economic and scientific exhibitions in Ukraine. There exists a very intensified tourist movement between Poland and Ukraine and an exchange cooperation between the frontier provinces, for instance, between Cracow and Lviv.

Question: Do the Poles think it would be in the interest of Poland to establish Ukrainian schools, the press and publications for the Ukrainian minority, and a Ukrainian university?

Answer: Decidedly no. In the opinion of most Poles the Ukrainian problem after a just change of frontiers in 1944 has ceased to exist in Poland.

Question: Did you hear about a proposed "exchange" of Lviv for Stettin (Szczecin)?

Answer: Rumors to that effect circulated in certain quarters in Warsaw after a visit of Nikita S. Khrushchev in the winter of 1962-63 (on his way to East Berlin). But there is little credence in the eventual implementation of this "exchange."

Question: How do the Poles evaluate the removal of Shcherbitsky from the post of Premier of Ukraine and the recall of Podhorny to Moscow?

Answer: The problem of party personnel changes in the USSR is of little concern to the Poles. These changes have little to do with the internal situation of the USSR, but rather reflect the overall Soviet policy on the top echelon levels.

Question: What is the relation of the Polish Catholic Church with the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Poland?

Answer: In principle this problem does not exist for the Poles, inasmuch as the Ukrainian Uniate Church in Poland numbers only a very small group of communicants. The Polish episcopate, together with the Polish government, is very much opposed to the Ukrainian Uniate Church.

Question: What do the Poles think of the release of Metropolitan Joseph Slipy? Is it true that Cardinal Wyszynski proposed to him that

he stay in Poland?

Answer: The release of Metropolitan Joseph Slipy was acclaimed in Poland, inasmuch as in this the Poles saw a step toward the improvement of the religious situation in the USSR as well as it being a forerunner of the normalization of relations between the Holy See and the socialist countries. As to the reported proposal of Cardinal Wyszynski, it seems to have little basis in fact.

Question: Why do the Poles refuse to establish a Ukrainian Catholic diocese for some 400,000 Ukrainian Catholics in Poland?

Answer: Both the Polish Catholic hierarchy and the Polish government do not support this project, inasmuch as both do not see any necessity for establishing a Ukrainian Catholic diocese in Poland.

Question: What do you think of the present relaxation between the West and the East?

Answer: As everywhere else in the world, so in Poland, too, the signing of the nuclear test ban treaty brought great joy and satisfaction, with the belief that it will further contribute toward the relaxation of international tensions. There is a general belief in Poland that the line of Khrushchev tending toward the improvement of relations with the West is firm and solid.

Question: What do they think in Poland about the Soviet-Chinese conflict?

Answer: The Polish government is trying to stay away from the Soviet-Chinese conflict, inasmuch as it does not touch directly upon any Polish national interest. The Poles remember well that the People's Chinese Republic gave substantial support to Wladyslaw Gomulka in 1956 in his struggle against Moscow.

Question: Why do the Poles refuse to support the national aspirations of Ukrainians, Byelorussians and other non-Russian nations inside the USSR?

Answer: The Poles are not interested in any nationalist development in the countries which are its neighbors for historical reasons.

Question: What is the Polish reaction toward a proposal to create a Ukrainian patriarchate in Kiev?

Answer: This matter having no direct influence upon the internal situation of Poland does not interest Polish public opinion as a whole.

Question: What is the function of the Polish Consulate in Kiev?

Answer: We don't have enough information on that score, but it is assumed that its function is to represent the Polish cultural and economic interests and the strengthening of Polish-Ukrainian relations,

including Polish-Ukrainian friendship.

Question: Why is there no Ukrainian Consulate in Warsaw?

Answer: The matter in question depends on the Soviet competence rather than on Polish initiative. The Polish side does not see any reason for the establishment of a Ukrainian Consulate in Warsaw because of the small number of Ukrainians in Poland (the situation is reversed in the USSR, where there are a greater number of Poles). Besides the interest of the Ukrainian minority in Poland is represented by the Consul General of the USSR in Warsaw.

Question: How do the Poles look upon the non-Russian nations in the USSR? Do they appreciate their significance?

Answer: It was generally believed in Poland that after the Stalin regime the non-Russian nations in the USSR would have a better opportunity to develop their national and cultural traditions. The Poles realize the fact that the USSR is not a monolithic state, but a multi-national state.

Question: Do the Poles foresee the possibility of further development of liberal tendencies in Soviet literature and arts?

Answer: There is a general belief that the liberal tendencies in Soviet literature and arts will continue to develop and expand and that there will be no return to the pre-Stalinist era in which all cultural life in the USSR was rigidly controlled by the party.

Question: What importance do the Poles ascribe to the Communist Parties of France and Italy in the communist bloc regarding the Soviet-Chinese rift?

Answer: Despite the superficial differences, it would seem that the viewpoints of the Communist Parties of France and Italy, as well as those of the socialist countries, especially those of Poland, as well as East Germany, seem to be quite identical, particularly regarding the differences between Moscow and Peking. Poland will always back up Moscow rather than the Chinese, and this is also expected from the Communist Parties of France and Italy.

Question: What can be done toward the improvement of Polish-Ukrainian relations?

Answer: There is no hatred and antipathy toward the Ukrainians in Poland, especially among the young generation who knows of the Polish-Ukrainian nationalist antagonism only from history. In present-day Poland there exists a friendly attitude toward present-day Ukraine. On the other hand, Polish chauvinists in the emigration are supporting old positions and openly advocate the detachment of Lviv from the Ukrainian territory.

The two Polish Bishops, Klepacz and Bednorz, while queried on the Ukrainian situation in Poland, stated that there is no open per-

secution of Ukrainians, and the Polish Catholic Church is helping the Ukrainian Catholic clergy with their Masses and other church practices. Both expressed their satisfaction over the release of Metropolitan Slipy.

However, they refused to comment on the proposed Ukrainian Catholic patriarchate or the establishment of a Ukrainian Catholic diocese in Poland, stating that these matters are the prerogatives of the Holy See.

Bishop Klepacz asked for copies of The Ukrainian Quarterly and The Ukrainian Bulletin, which were given to him during the last meeting.

(Most of the Polish journalists were of the opinion that the Polish Catholic episcopate is traditionally anti-Ukrainian, and it stubbornly refuses to allow a Ukrainian Catholic administration to be established in Poland, saying that such an interdiction is stipulated in a Soviet-Polish treaty.)